

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1070
ANSWERED ON:09.03.2005
WORLD BANK STUDY
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the recent study on social progress and outlook made by the World Bank shows that health indicators in India have not exactly improved and shows a mixed bag of results ;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor as mentioned in the study ; and
- (c) the main steps being considered to improve the health programmes as suggested by the study?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE (SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (b) According to recent study on social progress and outlook made by the World Bank, there has been a progressive improvement in certain health indicators, viz, life expectancy at birth, infant mortality rate (IMR) and malnourished children, over last two decades. However, there is a slight downward trend in health indicators like maternal mortality rate (MMR) and prevalence of HIV. The Report has, however, qualified that there are problems with the data for the indicator on MMR in some of the largest States that raised questions regarding data at the national level. The report of the National Family Health Survey-II also acknowledges that the difference in the estimates of MMR of NFHS-I and NFHS-II is not statistically significant due to various reasons such as large sampling errors etc. The Sample Registration System (SRS) of the Registrar General of India have estimated the MMR for the country as 407 per 1,00,000 live births in 1998 which is the same period when NFHS-II have estimated the MMR as 540 per 1,00,000 live births. It is thus not correct to say that the maternal mortality rate has worsened.

It is true that the estimated number of HIV infections in the country has risen from 3.5 million infections in 1998 to 5.1 million infections in 2003. Reasons for rise in HIV positive persons are low awareness of people about HIV/AIDS in the country especially rural and female partners in the highly vulnerable states; high proportion of migrant population; inadequate safe sex practices; and large number of vulnerable population.

(c) In order to accelerate decline of Maternal Mortality Rate, provision has been made for upgrading Primary Health Centres for providing 24-hour delivery services, operationalising the First Referral units for providing Emergency Obstetric Care and training the health staff for providing Skilled Birth Attendance at delivery, under the Second Phase of Reproductive & Child Health Programme.

In order to prevent and control the spread of HIV/AIDS in India, Government has launched a comprehensive National AIDS Control Programme, currently under implementation throughout the country as a centrally sponsored scheme with following components:-

- Preventive interventions for high-risk populations through targeted interventions adopting a multi-pronged strategy including peer counseling and behaviour change;
- Preventive interventions for the general population through programmes for blood safety, voluntary counseling and testing services, Prevention of Parent to Child, Transmission (PPTCT), Information Education and Communication (IEC);
- Provision of low cost care and support services by providing community care services, treatment of opportunistic infections and prevention of occupational exposure;
- Collaborative efforts to promote inter-sectoral programme activities including workplace interventions and public private partnerships;
- Building technical and managerial capacities for programme implementation through surveillance, training, monitoring and evaluation, technical resource groups, operational research and programme management.